Oh Well, OK by botanicapoetica

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He'd get up later.

Oh Well, OK

Billy woke to the sight of old red upholstery. It was the same view he'd had every day for, well, he couldn't remember. It didn't feel important, he couldn't remember what important felt like either. It was like having a big smudge on your windshield. His windshield, right, he had a car. It must be somewhere, but it didn't feel important to think on it further. He focused on sitting up, lifting his good arm to help himself up.

"Your eyes are open, that's good. Hey, kid." Someone was talking to him but he couldn't see them. Guess he hadn't sat up after all. A hand was on his back and he thought he should be scared, angry maybe. But he couldn't remember what that felt like so he left it for later. He'd get up later.

"Billy, let's try sitting up for a second, okay? Hey, hey, it's okay." Someone was talking to him again, and the world tilted up until he felt the couch supporting his back. He saw Hopper's face and it was warped, twisted with concern and maybe something else. He felt the urge to sniff so he did, felt like someone had poured water all over his face. He would've noticed that, maybe. Hopper's face didn't change and Billy saw him lift his hand out of the corner of his eye and felt him wiping the water away, but he wasn't saying anything anymore.

Hopper was in front of him on the floor but someone was sitting next to where his feet had been. He felt too tired to look over but could remember just a little bit; El, kid, curly hair. He thought maybe she was always sitting there when he was awake, but wasn't sure why. Sometimes there was a small hand on his forehead when he was laying down, could've been her too. He wondered if she went to the middle school, but he'd never seen her.

"School?" He heard himself say, but he didn't sound like himself. He sounded far away and crackled like an old radio, and suddenly there was a glass in front of him. He let El's hand help him drink it but he was too tired and his muscles weren't working and his face was still soaked so he ended up choking on some of it, felt Hopper's hand patting his back firmly. "No school right now, Billy." Was all Hopper

said, and his voice sounded weird but maybe Billy would ask him about it later. He could feel Hopper and El looking at him like they were expecting something, so he said “Okay.” and laid back down.

The second his head hit the couch cushions his whole body felt like it was being shaken. He felt sets of hands on him and wanted to tell them to stop shaking him, but they weren’t. He was shaking and his face was wet, he was crying. Once he realized he was crying he couldn’t stop, couldn’t remember what it felt like to stop crying. His muscles ached and his eyes burned, a band of pain constricting his skull, and he wanted someone to help him but he didn’t think he could say it right now. A flash of brown hair in his mind had him crying harder, gagging himself on his own tears, and he was so sorry.

He was getting the couch wet and he couldn’t move and he was ruining everything and he wanted to tell them that he was sorry. He was so sorry, but he couldn’t stop. He felt the hands on him start moving in circles and heard someone telling him not to be sorry so he must’ve said something out loud. A long time passed, or maybe no time at all.

Hopper was lifting him up off the couch but his legs wouldn’t work. At least he’d stopped crying, or he thought he’d stopped. He watched the floor from behind Hopper’s back, saw El on the couch staring after him and then standing up to follow them somewhere. His eyes closed for a minute but when they opened they were all in the bathroom and Billy was sitting down on top of the toilet. Hopper was wiping his face with something warm that made his skin feel less tight and then he was holding a toothbrush out for Billy. Billy reached forward and it felt like lifting a car, everything in him telling him he couldn’t do it. His fingers closed around the toothbrush but it fell to the floor, and it fell to the floor the next few times until Hopper closed his eyes and ran it under the water.

He could at least open his mouth wide enough and let Hopper brush his teeth, some part in the back of his head telling him this wasn’t how it was supposed to be but it wasn’t loud enough. He spit in the sink like Hopper told him to and lost some time, came back crying with sorries tumbling out of his mouth again until his eyes opened and he saw the couch coming closer.

The familiar sight of red, well-worn upholstery greeted him and he almost sighed in relief. He wanted to do something, ask Hopper something, but he couldn’t remember. He was too tired right now, he’d just ask later.

Author's Note:

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